

Gen Walters

W / 1/11/74

King Constantine has been invited by the President of AHEPA (The Greek-American Cultural Society) to speak at the Society's convention in Hollywood, Florida which will be held from 19-25 August. The King is expected to arrive in the US on 23 August.

The above is from a Greek-language newspaper, confirmed by a [redacted]

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The President of AHEPA, Dr Michael Spiridakis, acted unilaterally in extending the invitation and he is opposed by AHEPA's Board of Directors. A major confrontation is developing between Spiridakis and the Board over the issue.

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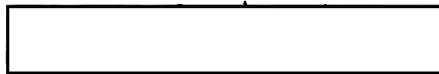


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July 23, 1973

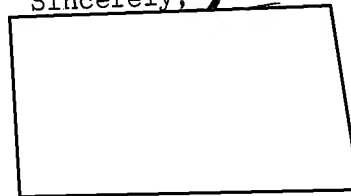
Lt. Gen. Vernon Walters



Dear Dick:

Attached is a statement made today by King Constantine
for your information.

Sincerely,



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OEV/sg

Attachment

DECLARATION OF H.M. THE KING CONSTANTINE
OF THE HELLENES
ON MONDAY 23 JULY
PRIOR TO THE REFERENDUM WHICH WILL BE HELD
ON JULY 29TH

People of Greece,

On Sunday you will be going to the polls. It is always a great and sacred moment for a people when it expresses its will. That is the moment when a people exercises its complete power. It is then that, as the sole sovereign arbiter, a people decides on the present, determines the future, and makes history. But only on one basic and obvious condition: that the people goes to the polling booths in complete freedom and that its vote is respected by everyone.

The day after the total destruction of the prevailing regime by the unlawful constitutional decree of 1st June, I at once declared in my proclamation that I would willingly submit to your judgement, provided it could be freely expressed. And I went on to state the elementary preconditions necessary for a genuine plebiscite:

1. Abolition of martial law.
2. A general amnesty for political offences.
3. Restoration of real freedom of the press.
4. The organisation and conduct of the plebiscite by an impartial caretaker government.

Nobody in the world could deny that the preconditions I proposed were the minimum possible guarantees, in a country

where political freedoms have been throttled for six years and more. And yet we are only a few days away from the plebiscite, not a single one of those conditions has been fulfilled. Quite the contrary: the number of those imprisoned for their efforts to win freedom has increased instead of diminished. Scores of arrests have been made under the prevailing martial law. Outstanding citizens, officers and politicians, are being arrested and detained without charges being brought against them. The farcical pretence of a free press has become even more obvious. Not a single word of my statement to the people and to world opinion was allowed to be published in the Greek newspapers. And the political leaders of the country are obliged to resort to foreign radio stations and foreign newspapers in order to reach the Greek people. Finally, an enormous propaganda machine, financed at vast public expense, has gone into action to launch a barrage of lies, libels and threats not only against me and against the political and cultural leaders of the country, but against the whole people. The object of this campaign is to persuade people that they must be slaves if they want to be secure, and that it is now a crime to care for the common good and for their freedom.

Today, on the eve of the plebiscite speaking as an individual, in the name of the legality and on behalf of the Greek people I denounce all these shameful things.

What else can it mean, except a callous denial of your own sovereignty, of your own will, your own dignity, that you are being asked to approve a fundamental change of your form of government while at the same time you are told that the change will certainly happen, whether you approve it or not?

What else can it mean, except an exercise of brutal totalitarianism, when you are offered no alternative solution? When you are given no choice? When opposition is forbidden? When there is no other candidate? When discussion is punished? When greek men and greek women are being dragged to the polls to vote for a DICTATORSHIP?

How can we not be indignant when, as the political leaders have shown those who have failed for four years to implement the promises made to the Greek people, the Greek people are asked to approve a fundamental change of their form of government while at the same time they are told that the change will certainly happen, whether they approve it or not?

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people to vote for a new Constitution which aims at the establishment of a permanent dictatorship - Constitution which borrows its main features from the most repellent authoritarian systems and which imposes totalitarian role in the guise of a Parliamentary Presidential Republic? When the fraud which is being prepared the continuation of violence and the unceasing deception of the people, go beyond all limits of shamelessness and exceed the bounds of imagination? When the intelligence of the Greek people is degraded by the public pronouncements the misleading promises and even the threats of their rulers? When the new Republic, which has been advertised bears the ironic and provocative title " Presidential Parliamentary Democracy "? When in fact there is no trace of parliamentarianism or democracy and when the President is not elected but self appointed?

People of Greece::

I personally feel compelled at this point to declare in the most categorical terms that: if I am asking you to vote against this deformed monstrosity of a regime, it is not because I am trying to protect the Monarchy; if I denounce this attempt to introduce totalitarianism into Greece, it is not because I am trying to defend my own position as head of state. I do it only for Greece, out of my love for the Greek people.

I have promised - and the promise will always hold good - that if the elementary conditions existed for a free plebiscite I would be the first to submit to the people's verdict as to the Monarchy and as to my own person, no matter what that verdict was. It is obvious that, since the regime has shamefully refused to grant those conditions, the plebiscite of 29 July will have nothing whatever to do with the question whether Greece should or should not have a Monarchy. The plebiscite is not aimed against the Monarchy or against me personally; it is aimed against the whole of the Greek people and is designed to make tyranny permanent.

I wish to emphasise, since I want to dispel even the faintest shadow of doubt that may exist, that the question whether the present system of Government in Greece should be

monarchical or not is one to be decided exclusively by the sovereign people of Greece. I shall always regard the exercise of my duties as King of the Hellenes as subject to the people's will. It has been my ambition, and it will always be my ambition, to be a worthy King for all the Greeks, King of the people who created democracy and worshipped freedom. And I give my express promise that I will give the Greek people every possible freedom and all the psychological breathing-space it needs to be able to express its genuine opinion. And I will respect that opinion.

To prove the complete contempt of those who now govern Greece for persons, institutions and procedures, and in denouncing the fraud they are preparing for 29 July, I issue this challenge: even at this last moment, and despite the campaign of propaganda and terrorisation that they have launched, I challenge them to lift martial law; to grant an amnesty for political offences; to allow the press to be truly free; and to retire in favour of an impartial caretaker government of general acceptance, so that within short time the plebiscite may be held in conditions guaranteeing the genuine expression of the people's will. And I declare to you, the people of Greece, that I will then unhesitatingly submit to your will, whatever it may be. But this is something they dare not do; for they fear your verdict. It is the duty of every Greek citizen to realise the latest fraud which is being perpetrated against him. The plebiscite is design not only to stifle the will of the Greek people, even more to enable the regime to exploit the falsified result, so as to enable those who have so far ruled unlawfully to claim that they have now been blessed by the free will of the people.

People of Greece:

Neither you nor I are any longer under any kind of misapprehension as to the true intentions of those who are unlawfully exercising power in Greece. But neither are they under any misapprehension as to true feelings of the people towards them. That is why they do anything except permit the people the opportunity of freely expressing its will. But there are no impassés in the history of nations, when people are determind to find

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faced with the need to say " OCHI " - to say NO to violence and totalitarianism. You said NO once before - and you were victorious. You were victorious even though, at that time also, the force ranged against you seemed to be overwhelming and those who exercised it seemed to have an infinite variety of resources. Alone, you conquered. It was you alone, the people of Greece, who won through, because the others either compromised, or submitted, or collaborated, or were blindly indifferent.

You are again required to do battle with your vote of NO. And it is certain that, if you concentrate all your strength together, you will win again. If your action, movements are restricted by force, if the true expression of your will is reversed by falsified results, you must, at least, keep your mind free and you must freely express what you think by voting NO.

I am fully aware of the difficulties and the sacrifices involved in doing your duty. Every day I follow - and news reaches me from the remotest villages of Greece - the measures which are being taken to violate the will of the people and to force spirited resistance into submission. It is enough to think of the crude detail of the two-colour voting papers to realise that those who are preparing to perpetrate this organised fraud are not merely shameless but wish to appear shameless.

Following the totalitarian example, the result of the plebiscite may well be decided in advance - down to the precise percentage of YES votes to be announced. No matter. The massive vote of NO will reverberate with a crushing moral force which will win through. Do your duty, and the tyrants will tremble. They will find it impossible to recruit the thousands they need as collaborators in their unlawful conspiracy, when they are faced with the united opposition of millions.

Those in power are lying when they claim the support of the Armed Forces. The Armed Forces are not with them, as the recent rising in the Navy proves. They do not have on their side the honest officers of Greece - and Greek officers are honest as to the vast majority - in any of the services. Nor do they have on their side the Security Forces, which have always selflessly served their country. They rely for their support on a few

extremist and deluded instruments who show unrestrained and unlawful zeal, but who must know that they will one day be called to account for their actions.

Above all, they do not have you, the people of Greece, on their side. And you, as you have shown, are the only truly irrepressible power in the land. The students, who grew up under a dictatorship, under the daily directives by old commissar-propagandists and followed by new commissars in their Schools and Faculties, have given the lead in saying NO. One thing is certain: the dictatorship, no matter what its disguise, will not survive in Greece. Greece will reject it utterly, as the body rejects foreign tissue. The enemies of the Greek people try to distort your will, by putting into action the plans they have so carefully prepared in order to circumvent your will. You, for your part, must preserve your freedom of thought. There is no more honorable, valuable or patriotic legacy that you can pass on to your children.

People of Greece:

My appeal is a proclamation of unity, peace and progress. I have visions, as have your responsible political leaders, and as I know you also so fervently desire, of a Greece which is free, strong, alive with creative activity and the joy of life, with the blessings of an educated and civilised existence. A Greece which is not dejected by the thought that she herself is deprived of that which she gave the world - democracy and the free interchange of ideas.

In full consciousness of my responsibilities, with complete confidence in the potential achievements of the nation, with the vision of a happy and prosperous Greece, and with devotion to the creation of a true and genuine democracy for you, I ask you to cast your vote of NO against the dictatorship.

I ask the officers and men of the Armed Forces and of the Security Forces, all public servants, officials and clergy, all those who have sworn before God and men their allegiance to the Constitution and their country - and who do not wish to violate their oath, as those have done who have lied so often to retain their hold on power - to encourage the people to express its opinion boldly and freely. They have all kinds of means at their

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disposal - and they know what those means are - to perform this supreme duty. And they have an infallible guide: their own conscience.

People of Greece:

I want you to receive this message with faith and love. Read it wherever you go, tell it to everyone who has not been able to hear it. Do what you have to do on July 29. And you may be sure that, by voting NO, you will win the day.

Your NO will defeat fear, terror and tyranny.

Your NO will fulfil your duty, towards yourself and towards Greece.

Keep your YES for yourself - YES for the true democracy of tomorrow, in a truly proud and happy Greece.

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[REDACTED]
February 28, 1973

Lt. Gen. Vernon A. Walters, USA
[REDACTED]

Dear Dick,

The student activities should be properly evaluated.

Perhaps, most of the people ignore one basic fact. The students in Athens live in their homes and not on the campus. Living on campus assists in the creation of a student-climate psychology and objectives which might be totally different from the feelings of the society. In the case of Greece, where the students live with their parents, any student activity should not be considered as an isolated behavior, separated from the wishes of the community. The students reflect the feelings of the people in Greece. This is why conservative politicians and even retired generals support them.

What makes the entire situation explosive is the stupid way the dictatorship attempted to oppress the voice and feelings - by drafting the students into the Army.

The students' activities are the best warning for all concerned.

Sincerely yours,

[REDACTED]
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OEV/ns

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28 November 1972

Dear ,

Many thanks for your letter. I, too, enjoyed our get-together after so many years.

I am returning herewith the copy of the King's speech and will be showing the other papers to interested parties. I understand the problem and will do what I can to ensure a solution in the best interests of both countries and Western freedom. But, obviously, other people and other considerations play in this matter.

Please give my best to Matina and be sure and call me next time you come to town.

As ever,

Vernon A. Walters
Lieutenant General, USA

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MEMORANDUM FOR: DDCI

Thank you very much. I have sent a
copy for its information.

T. H. Karamessines

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27 Nov 1972

(DATE)

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November 21, 1972

Lt. Gen. Vernon A. Walters USA

Dear Dick:

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Back in [] I wish to thank you very much for your hospitality and the unforgettable day I spent with both of you. I enjoyed immensely every minute of my visit with you. Who could ever imagine 16 years ago that our paths would cross again and under such circumstances.

For four years I have been trying to convey the message to Greece that this country is not supporting the dictatorship by design. It is simply tolerating an undesirable situation until circumstances allow a proper alternative to develop.

The time has come now to prove whether those of us who maintained this position and this faith were correct or were totally mislead and as a result have been misleading our country and those who trusted us.

The immediate future will either render credibility to our position or will make all of us untrustworthy and the alternative solution we talked about impossible. The choice is not ours. The choice is up to those with the power to influence events. There is no risk involved in the program we discussed in detail. Initiatives and determination are, of course, required.

Millions are ready to support any serious efforts signaling a return to normal conditions without chaos. Millions, on the contrary, will be totally disappointed if the present conditions of toleration are allowed to continue by neglect or by design this time. Then, Greece and the West will be left with the two extremes as the only alternatives, since our contribution to a solution will become impossible.

I trust, in your wisdom, that you will do your best to assist both our countries.

Please give my warm regards home. Matina sends her greetings. She was delighted when I talked to her about you and, of course, she is looking forward to the day she will meet your sister and see you again after so many years.

I hope to hear from you soon.

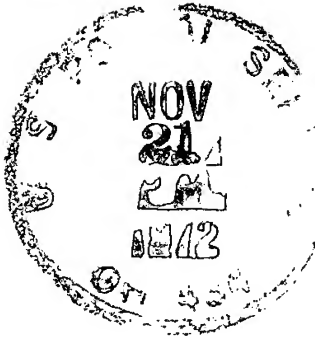
Yours sincerely,

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OEV/sa



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Lt. Gen. Vernon A. Walters USA



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VIA AIR MAIL